

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01

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P R 030245Z APR 76

FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3708

INFO 13TH AF

CINCPACREPHIL

CINCPAC

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, RP

SUBJECT: GOP RELEASES HOLD ON MACAPAGAL STORY

REF: MANILA 4676

1. GOP LIFTED RESTRICTION ON LOCAL MEDIA COVERAGE OF MACAPAGAL ASYLUM REQUEST. APRIL 3 PRESS COVERAGE, BASED ON EXCERPTS FROM STATE DEPARTMENT AND MACAPAGAL STATEMENTS, IS HEADLINED "ASYLUM REQUEST DENIED" AND NOTES HE (A) SOUGHT ASYLUM BECAUSE OF FEAR HE WOULD BE ARRESTED FOLLOWING DISTRIBUTION OF BOOK URGING RESTORATION OF DEMOCRACY; (B) DEPARTED EMBASSY RESIDENCE AT 1:00 A.M. REPEAT 1:00 A.M. BECAUSE U.S. WOULD NOT GRANT ASYLUM; (C) AND AFTER HE HAD RECEIVED ASSURANCES THROUGH U.S. EMBASSY HE WOULD NOT BE ARRESTED AND WOULD BE FREE TO LEAVE COUNTRY. PRESS NOTED ONLY OFFICIAL COMMENT SO FAR WAS GENERAL ROMULO'S APRIL FOOL'S REMARK (REFTEL); MALACANANG SPOKESMAN INDICATED ROMULO STATEMENT WOULD BE ONLY COMMENT FROM GOVERNMENT AT THAT TIME.

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2. VALENCIA, DAILY EXPRESS, APRIL 3, SUGGESTED CIA HAD TRIED TO USE MACAPAGAL TO TOPPLE MARCOS AND SAID THAT HE WOULD NEVER HAVE SOUGHT ASYLUM IN RESIDENCE WITHOUT PREVIOUS ASSURANCES FROM U.S. GOVERNMENT. VALENCIA DENIED MACAPAGAL STATEMENT ALLEGING MACAPAGAL HAD RECEIVED ASSURANCES AGAINST ARREST BUT CONCLUDED MACAPAGAL SHOULD LEAVE THE COUNTRY SINCE HE WAS NOW SO DISCREDITED. FULL TEXTS OF PRESS COMMENT WILL BE REPORTED USIS WIRELESS FILE APRIL 5.

3. ALL PRESS CARRIED FIRST INSTALLMENT OF READER'S DIGEST ASIAN EDITION STORY "INIMITABLE IMELDA" WRITTEN BY GENERAL ROMULO'S FRIEND BETH DAY. PUBLICATION OF READER'S DIGEST STORY FOLLOWS PUBLICATION OF NEWSWEEK ASIAN EDITION SPREAD ON MRS. MARCOS.

4. COMMENT: U.S. DENIAL OF ASYLUM HAS MADE IT POSSIBLE FOR GOP TO INFORM PUBLIC OF MACAPAGAL'S ASYLUM REQUEST. ALTHOUGH PRESS COVERAGE SO FAR DOES NOT HIDE FACT MACAPAGAL TOOK DRASTIC ACTION BECAUSE OF POLITICAL DIS-AGREEMENT WITH MARCOS, WE ASSUME SUBSEQUENT COMMENT WILL BE DESIGNED FURTHER TO DISCREDIT AND BELITTLE HIM. VALENCIA'S SUGGESTION MACAPAGAL HAD BEEN USED BY CIA CONSISTENT WITH THAT APPROACH; GOVERNMENT HAS CIRCULATED RUMORS TO THIS EFFECT IN ANY EVENT SINCE MACAPAGAL LAUNCHED CAMPAIGN IN JANUARY TO CONVENE INTERIM NATIONAL ASSEMBLY. APPEARANCE OF "INIMITABLE IMELDA" STORY SO NEATLY JUXTAPOSED WITH REPORT OF MACAPAGAL'S DOWNFALL WILL NOT BE LOST ON READING PUBLIC. STULL

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